

THE SELF PORTRAIT: HOW ARE WE DOING IN SOUTH CAROLINA?



South Carolina's population growth, increase in developed land, test score rankings, and poverty indices are under scrutiny and facing unprecedented change. In the midst of these changes, it is important to assess how the state's citizens perceive they are faring. Understanding concerns, where needs are going unmet, where there is optimism, and where resources should be targeted is the goal of the *Self Portrait: How Are We Doing in South Carolina?* An ongoing biennial survey developed in collaboration with the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research Survey Laboratory, this project is designed to help us better understand South Carolinian's perceptions of the state's current and future outlook, if attitudes are changing over time and where changes in priorities may be in order. For further information, contact dlondon@strom.clemson.edu.

Survey questions and aggregated results are organized by topic area. To view survey results, follow the links below.

- Most Important State Issue
- Quality of Life
- Development and Environment
- Civic Issues and Government
- Healthcare
- Education
- Economy

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

“What is the most important issue that South Carolina will face over the next ten years?”

	Late 06	Mid 07	Late 07	Mid 08	Late 08	Mid 09	Late 09	Mid 10	Late 10	Mid 11
Education	16.5	25.8	13.8	11.3	12.1	20.3	10.0	20.5	15.0	17.9
Economy	18.8	34.3	20.6	61.6	34.4	44.7	39.4	49.3	39.5	52.8
Healthcare	15.8	5.0	16.9	5.8	13.8	4.2	17.4	8.0	11.0	6.3
Environment	7.9	2.9	11.7	1.7	6.4	0.8	4.5	1.3	3.9	1.1
Growth & Development	10.4	5.0	5.0	4.1	3.2	2.0	1.8	3.7	2.2	2.1
Population	3.1	7.7	5.0	4.3	3.7	3.4	1.9	3.0	1.4	1.3
Gov't Services	5.6	5.2	4.6	3.8	6.9	11.9	4.3	5.8	6.0	6.9
Civil Liberties	1.6	4.6	2.0	1.7	1.0	0.7	1.9	2.8	2.4	1.5
Crime	2.6	4.6	1.4	3.3	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.4	0.9	0.3
War	1.5	4.1	0.5	0.6	0.1	~	~	~	~	0.0
Other	7.0	1.8	16.7	1.2	4.1	0.6	3.5	3.8	6.1	4.0
Don't Know	15.6	~	1.7	0.7	12.9	10.2	13.9	0.7	11.6	5.8
No. of Responses	786	744	807	759	911	812	712	777	834	833

QUALITY OF LIFE

“Do you think that the quality of life in South Carolina is better, worse, or stayed about the same in the last five years?”

	% Late 06	% Late 07	% Mid 09	% Late 10
Better	26.1	28.1	15.0	14.5
Worse	23.0	22.2	38.9	39.3
Same	46.7	44.2	41.9	42.7
Don't know	4.2	5.5	4.2	3.5
No. of Responses	821	813	809	839

QUALITY OF LIFE

“Thinking about the community you live in, would you say that in the past three years the availability of housing that is affordable for all income levels has gotten better, gotten worse, stayed the same or are you not sure how it has changed?”

	% Mid 08	% Late 09
Better	14.5	14.7
Worse	35.7	24.2
Same	18.4	22.8
Don't Know	31.4	38.3
No. of Responses	821	822

QUALITY OF LIFE

“The next generation of South Carolinians will be able to compete in the global economy.”

	% Late 06	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Late 09	% Late 10
Agree	58.7	56.4	55.2	53.5	48.3
Disagree	35.8	38.4	38.0	39.4	43.8
Don't Know	5.4	5.1	6.8	7.1	7.9
No. of Responses	821	813	916	828	838

QUALITY OF LIFE

“Why do you think the next generation of South Carolinians will be able to compete in the global economy?”

	% Late 06	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Late 10
Education	54.6	45.2	48.6	33.5
Technology	7.2	6.9	9.3	9.9
Economy	21.2	13.9	8.5	14.4
Government Services	5.5	2.7	6.7	6.4
General	10.6	22.1	15.7	23.3
Don't Know	8.2	9.1	11.2	12.5
No. of Responses	471	461	488	405

QUALITY OF LIFE

“Why do you think the next generation of South Carolinians will Not be able to compete in the global economy?”

	% Late 06	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Late 10
Education , Technology	57.8	52.8	55.0	50.2
Economic	12.2	19.0	15.9	18.6
Competition	2.8	1.5	4.8	2.8
Population Growth	2.2	2.1	1.6	1.3
Delinquency	9.2	5.7	8.0	9.6
General	6.3	16.0	10.1	15.1
Don't Know	9.5	2.8	4.6	2.5
No. of Responses	294	304	348	367

QUALITY OF LIFE

“Is South Carolina headed in the right direction?”

	% Late 06	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Late 09	% Late 10
Right direction	69.9	59.9	51.3	44.6	47.4
Wrong Direction	23.0	32.1	34.7	40.5	37.3
Don't Know	7.1	8.0	14.0	14.9	15.2
No. of Responses	817	813	911	826	834

QUALITY OF LIFE

"Do you think the next generation of South Carolinian's will be better off or worse off than the present generation?"

	% Mid 07
Better	42.7
Worse	44.7
About the same	4.9
Don't know	7.7
No. of Responses	833

QUALITY OF LIFE

"How much of an opportunity do you think the next generation of South Carolinians has to live better than their parents....great opportunity, some opportunity, not much opportunity or no opportunity?"

	% Mid 08	% Mid 09	% Mid 10
Great	20.2	25.1	33.5
Some	53.1	48.7	24.0
Not much	21.2	21.5	41.1
None	4.4	2.3	~
Don't Know	1.1	2.4	1.4
No. of Responses	833	813	813

QUALITY OF LIFE

“What is the most important factor in choosing a place to live?”

	% Late 06	% Mid 09	% Mid 11
Proximity to natural resources	22.0	4.8	3.1
Proximity to jobs	6.9	26.7	28.5
Good schools	20.2	22.6	18.8
Cost of living	2.0	11.7	12.4
Housing quality and price	3.0	6.8	7.2
Proximity to family members	4.2	15.1	13.9
Community vitality	32.0	7.9	4.4
Other factors	6.6	1.6	8.9
Don't know	3.0	2.7	2.7
No. of Responses	815	810	833

QUALITY OF LIFE

"How important is religion as a part of your daily life ?"

	% Mid 09	% Late 09	% Mid 11
Very important	73.7	74.7	71.7
Somewhat important	17.7	16.5	20.5
Not too important	4.5	4.1	3.6
Not important	3.2	3.9	3.4
Don't know	0.9	0.8	0.8
No. of Responses	809	808	820

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

“Do you prefer a higher rate of growth, a lower rate of growth, or about the same level of growth?”

	% Late 06	% Mid 08	% Mid 09	% Late 10
Higher	24.3	27.8	30.7	40.5
Lower	28.7	19.6	20.0	13.7
Same	45.6	49.8	47.1	42.8
Don't Know	1.4	2.8	2.3	3.0
No. of Responses	821	815	811	838

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

"Which of the following statements comes closest to expressing your overall view of the transportation system in South Carolina?"

	% Late 07
System works pretty well	27.0
Fundamental changes needed	50.2
Need to completely rebuild it	20.4
Don't know	2.4
No. of Responses	813

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

“Do you think that state and local governments should allow this anticipated growth to occur as it has over the past 10 years, should it do more to manage where this growth occurs, or should state and local governments promote more growth?”

	% Mid 07	% Late 09
Occur as it has/ Allow	13.0	10.7
Manage	51.9	44.4
Promote	27.3	31.3
Don't know	7.9	13.6
No. of Responses	818	814

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

“What should state and local government do to manage growth?”

	% Mid 07
Planning and land management	41.1
Community and economic development	21.2
Service provision and infrastructure	12.8
Population control	12.2
Environment	8.2
Others	4.5
No. of Responses	353

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

“What should state and local government do to promote growth?”

	% Mid 07
Community and economic development	65.5
Planning and land management	17.7
Service provision and infrastructure	11.0
Other	3.4
Population control	2.4
No. of Responses	158

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

“How much do you think the quantity and quality of water will limit the state’s economic growth ... a great deal, somewhat, not too much, or not at all?”

	% Mid 07	% Mid 09	% Mid 11
A great deal	29.7	33.6	33.5
Somewhat	31.4	36.4	36.9
Not much	19.3	18.0	17.7
Not at all	11.9	8.4	8.0
Don't know	7.7	3.6	3.9
No. of Responses	809	812	817

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

“Would you favor or oppose an increase in the state gasoline tax of five cents per gallon if these funds were used to improve the state's transportation system?”

	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Late 09	% Mid 10
Favor	26.2	41.0	43.6	36.0
Oppose	69.5	53.6	51.0	58.1
Other	2.0	2.1	3.2	2.2
Don't know	2.3	3.3	2.2	3.7
No. of Responses	811	914	823	809

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

“How interested are you in South Carolina political issues?”

	% Late 06	% Mid 11
Very Interested	36.3	29.6
Somewhat Interested	42.4	46.0
Not Too interested	20.8	23.9
Don't Know	0.5	0.5
No. of Responses	816	826

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

“How much of the time can you trust the state government?”

	% Late 06	% Mid 08	% Late 09	% Mid 11
About always	5.6	8.3	4.3	3.8
Most of the time	30.9	33.3	26.0	23.4
Sometime	53.9	50.9	55.8	57.5
Never	8.9	7.5	12.3	13.4
Don't know	0.7	~	1.7	2.0
No. of Responses	815	809	825	826

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

“Have you any contact with members of the South Carolina General Assembly in the past year?”

	% Mid 10	% Mid 11
Yes	11.3	9.7
No	88.2	90.0
Don't Know	0.5	0.3
No. of Responses	809	819

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

“How often do you think your voice is heard by members of the South Carolina General Assembly?”

	% Mid 10	% Mid 11
Most of the Time	10.8	7.8
Some of the Time	16.9	23.7
Rarely	6.4	8.7
No / Voice not Heard	57.9	55.4
Don't know	8.1	4.4
No. of Responses	806	815

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

“How much of the time do you think you can trust your local government?”

	% Mid 08	% Late 10
Just about always	7.2	4.6
Most of the time	37.0	24.1
Some of the time	47.6	57.0
Never	8.2	14.3
No of Responses	810	827

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

“Where do you get most of your information about the state of South Carolina?”

	% Late 06	% Mid 08	% Mid 11
Television	35.5	40.1	34.5
Newspaper	35.5	34.5	27.2
Radio	2.2	5.5	1.6
Internet	10.9	15.1	20.0
Acquaintances	7.1	1.2	2.0
Combination	6.1	1.9	3.7
Other	1.4	1.7	9.8
Don't know	1.3	~	1.2
No. of Responses	821	813	828

CIVIC ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT

"How important would you say it is for local governments in South Carolina to address the issue of illegal immigration in their communities...very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?"

	% Late 07	% Late 10
Very important	69.3	67.2
Somewhat important	20.7	20.0
Not too important	5.3	7.9
Not important	3.4	2.8
Don't know	1.3	2.0
No. of Responses	813	838

HEALTHCARE

“Would you favor or oppose an increase in the state tax on cigarettes of 50 cents per pack if these funds were used to improve the healthcare system in the state?”

	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Late 09
Favor	73.4	76.7	70.7
Oppose	20.5	18.7	24.2
Other	3.5	2.3	1.8
Don't know	2.6	2.3	3.3
No. of Responses	812	913	823

HEALTHCARE

“What do you think is the most important healthcare issue in South Carolina?”

	% Mid 07	% Late 10
Affordability	68.9	27.0
Accessibility	2.4	15.5
Elderly, children and low income	14.7	22.0
Health Professionals	2.5	2.3
Public health issues	7.8	17.2
Other	3.8	16.0
No. of Responses	737	728

HEALTHCARE

“Which of the following statements comes closest to expressing your overall view of the health care system in South Carolina?”

	% Late 07	% Mid 11
System works pretty well	20.3	21.0
Fundamental changes needed	53.2	48.0
Need to completely rebuild it	20	26.3
Don't Know	6.5	4.7
No. of Responses	811	817

EDUCATION

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of education students receive in kindergarten through grade twelve in South Carolina? Would you say you are completely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or completely dissatisfied?”

	% Late 07
Completely satisfied	10.9
Somewhat satisfied	35.7
Somewhat dissatisfied	32.0
Completely dissatisfied	16.1
No. of Responses	812

EDUCATION

"Do you think spending on education should be decreased, kept about the same, or increased, even if it means raising taxes?"

	% Late 07	% Late 08	% Mid 09	% Mid 10	% Mid 11
Decreased	5.9	8.2	5.6	7.2	7.7
Same	24.9	27.7	22.8	24.8	27.8
Increased	64.7	60.5	69.7	64.9	62.3
Don't know	4.5	3.6	1.8	3.1	2.2
No. of Responses	813	903	808	809	818

ECONOMY

"How concerned are you about your ability to pay your bills over the next year...very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?"

	% Mid 08	% Late 08	% Late 09
Very concerned	42.6	35.5	38.3
Somewhat concerned	28.3	27.0	29.4
Not too concerned	19.2	22.4	18.6
Not concerned	9.5	14.4	13.0
Don't know	0.4	0.7	0.7
No. Of Responses	815	903	823

ECONOMY

"How concerned are you about keeping or finding a job over the next year...very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?"

	% Late 08	% Late 09
Very concerned	26.8	32.3
Somewhat concerned	12.4	16.4
Not too concerned	18.2	17.7
Not concerned	26.9	20.2
Retired (Volunteered)	15.1	12.7
Don't know	0.7	0.7
No. Of Responses	900	823

ECONOMY

"Would you say that you (and your family living there) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?"

	% Mid 08	% Late 08
Better	37.5	28.1
Worse	43.7	52.7
Same (volunteered)	18.2	18.5
Don't know	0.6	0.7
No. of Responses	815	903

ECONOMY

"Would you say that job security in your community has gotten better, gotten worse or stayed the same over the past year?"

	% Mid 08	% Mid 10
Gotten Better	12.7	8.6
Gotten Worse	49.4	52.0
Stayed the Same	22.1	20.5
Don't know	15.8	19.0
No. of Responses	815	809

ECONOMY

"Would you say that job opportunities in your community has gotten better, gotten worse or stayed the same over the past year?"

	% Mid 08	% Mid 10
Gotten Better	3.2	12.4
Gotten Worse	60.3	54.7
Stayed the Same	15.9	29.5
Don't know	20.6	3.4
No. of Responses	815	809

ECONOMY

"How concerned are you about financially supporting yourself during retirement...very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?"

	% Mid 08	% Late 08	% Mid 09	% Mid 10	% Mid 11
Very concerned	50.5	45.8	51.3	44.5	55.4
Somewhat concerned	26.0	27.7	30.3	32.1	26.7
Not too concerned	17.2	16.7	11.4	14.9	12.4
Not concerned	6.3	8.8	6.0	7.6	5.1
Don't know	6.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.4
No. of Responses	815	898	809	808	819